United Nations A/HRC/37/NGO/36

General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 February 2018

English only

Human Rights Council
Thirty-seventh session
26 February-23 March 2018
Agenda item 4
Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Written statement* submitted by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is hereby circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[30 January 2018]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.18-01936(E)
1801936

Please recycle

ID with SR of Iran: Sanctions and Human Rights Issues in the Islamic Republic of Iran

In the last couple of years, many international organizations[1], UN Special Rapporteur of Unilateral Coercive Measures[2], and human rights activists[3] have debated the humanitarian consequences of the unilateral coercive measures. They have argued that sanctions target mainly and firstly the people of the target countries, and not the target governments. A review of the recent unrests in Iran in December 2017, was a sudden eruption of a massive undeniable humanitarian crises which got a chance to show up, while many other aspects of the humanitarian issues related to sanctions remained uncovered.

In 29 December, 2017 thousands of people in Mashad rally into streets shouting for jobs, economic welfare, and their savings in the newly-bankrupt financial institutions such as Thamen and Caspian. Sooner than anyone can expect, the unrests spread to different other cities with religiously more conservative, working class population than Tehran or Isfahan. Although some of the protestors were using political and social mottos, the major demands of the people were focused on jobs for youth, the saving money of the people, the recent cases of the administrative corruptions, and economic wellbeing of the people.

Analysts believed that the demonstrations had a different feature this time; it was the grassroots protests with economic claims rather than middle class uprising for political aims. The demonstrations were mainly held in the less developed areas, far from the metropolis centers of the provinces. Moreover, the protesters were mainly from lower class and lower middle class workers, farmers, or unemployed people. Additionally, their statements targeted economic issues such as jobs, banking system, and economic corruption.

We believe, this social anger was partly the result of several years of economic and financial pressure of the sanctions on the Iranian society. To survive the economic sanctions, the Iranian economy should have opened the door for semiofficial companies, non-official markets, and closed financial institutions. Such a system was to save the banking transactions and economy from collapsing under the sanction system. Although the Iranian economists warned about such financial institutions, it was an inevitable solution to save the trade flow even for essential goods such as grains, food, medicine, etc. Such situation made it almost impossible for even the best-intentioned regulators to regulate the banking system and economic market. The involvement of opaque financial market worked contrary to transparency, and the lack of transparency was a recipe for poor banking practices," said Sir Simon Gass, who was the British ambassador to Tehran from 2009 to 2011, in a recent interview.[4]

Sanctions targeted all aspects of the Iranian macro-economy too. As sanctions against Iran were intensified in 2011, all of the economic indexes started to collapse in the next few years. The parity rate of US dollar against the Iranian currency, Rial, reached its highest level in whole history of the country. In the period between 2010 and 2012, every US dollar was traded for 36,000 Rials, up from the previous rate of 14,000 Rials.[5] It greatly increased inflation rate and reduced purchasing power of the Iranian people. The inflation rate raised dramatically and reached to 34.7 percent in 2013, from 10.8 in 2010.[6]

---

1 Sanctions as Blatant Violation of Human Rights: A Case Study: Sanctions on Supply of Medicines to the Iranian Society; http://www.odvv.org/product-1922-Sanctions-as-Blatant-Violation-of-Human-Rights

2 http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/UCM/Pages/Statements.aspx

3 Campaign Against Sanctions and Military Intervention in Iran:
https://fa.wikipedia.org/wiki/جنبش_ضد_تحریم_و_مداخله_نظامی_در_ایران

4. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/20/world/middleeast/iran-protests-corruption-banks.html

5. http://www.modiriatefarda.ir/index.php?option

6. http://eghtesadgardan.ir/fa/news/1264/نرخ-تورم-و-گرانی-در-39-سال-بعد-از-انقلاب-و-81-سال-گذشته-از-1316-تا-1396-جدول-برای-محاسبه-مهریه-و-سایر-کالاها-cpi-آخرین-شاخص

The dramatic part of the story is that despite the formal end of the international sanctions after the Iran Deal in July 2015, Iranian economy has not recovered from the malaises of the sanctions. The economy is still engaged with lots of challenges which were accentuated by the sanctions. Hundreds of thousands of people lost money because of the collapsing financial institutions. In the international market, Iran continue to suffer from the unilateral coercive measures targeting Iranians by the United States of America. The United States continues to threaten international banking system and companies from entering into any interactions with Iran.[7] There is no well-known financial institution with banking interactions with Iranian companies. "The implementing regulation does not repeal all EU sanctions on all Iranian banks, therefore Swift remains prohibited from providing specialized financial messaging services to the EU-sanctioned Iranian banks that remain listed under EU regulation," Swift officials declared after the Iran Deal, adding that it is incorporated under Belgian law and has to comply with all related EU regulation as confirmed by the Belgian government. Swift declines to comment on any specific problems with reconnection in Iran, nor on its arrangements with Cisco; Cisco did not respond to requests for comment.[8]

Recommendations:
Organization for Defending Victims of Violence once again invites the Human Rights Council and Ms. Asma Jahangir, the Special Rapporteur of the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, to recognize the suffering of the Iranian people by the illegal unilateral coercive measures and recall the government of the United States to stop its extraterritorial policies against Iranian people which are clear examples of gross violation of human rights of the Iranian people.

We invite Ms. Asma Jahangir to raise the voice of the Iranian for their economic and developmental rights. In the 37th session of the Human Rights Council, when she expresses her concerns over the loss of lives in Iranian protests, she should also look back to her previous report to see to what extent did she reflect on the economic issues and the long lasting economic consequences of the sanctions.

7.https://books.google.com/books?id=MT3vDQAAQBAJ&pg=PA30&lpg=PA30&dq=amnesty+international+sanctions+iran&source=bl&ots=Qgr_x71Ow5&sig=t7K9xPbCpMNJTcUb3gmUouXHP3Y&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjhuLPYtv3YAhWqLMAKHcEIAqsQ6AEISDAG#v=onepage&q=amnesty%20international%20sanctions%20iran&f=false

8 . https://www.euromoney.com/article/b12knv606zp6jn/banks-frustrated-as-irans-swift-return-is-held-up?copyrightInfo=true